

THE BEACON



A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND THE HOME



VOLUME I.

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THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH—HERRING.

Two Voyagers.

Two butterflies went out at noon
And waltzed above a stream,
Then stepped straight through the firmament
And rested on a beam;

And then together bore away
Upon a shining sea,—
Though never yet, in any port,
Their coming mentioned be.

If spoken by the distant bird,
If met in either sea
By frigate or by merchantman,
Report was not to me.

EMILY DICKINSON.

Don't Begin.

Once there was a little fly who saw a
spider's web in the corner of the room. "I
will keep away from it," he thought; "for,
if I should get one foot in it, I might get
two, and soon I would be caught altogether."
Wasn't that a wise little fly?

In the same room was a little girl who
had broken a vase. Something whispered
in her ear, "Hide the pieces and don't tell
mother."

"No, no!" said she. "If I should de-
ceive mother once, I might again, and pretty
soon I should be telling wrong stories. I
just won't begin." Wasn't she a wise little
girl?—*Mayflower.*

It is every man's duty to discipline and
guide himself with God's help. Guided by
the good example and good works of others,
we must yet rely mainly upon our own ef-
forts.
SAMUEL SMILES.

The Village Blacksmith.

Under a spreading chestnut tree
The village smithy stands;
The smith, a mighty man is he,
With large and sinewy hands;
And the muscles of his brawny arms
Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long,
His face is like the tan;
His brow is wet with honest sweat,
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn to night,
You can hear his bellows blow;
You can hear him swing his heavy sledge,
With measured beat and slow,
Like a sexton ringing the village bell,
When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church,
And sits among his boys;
He hears the parson pray and preach,
He hears his daughter's voice
Singing in the village choir,
And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice
Singing in Paradise!
He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling,—rejoicing,—sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begun,
Each evening sees its close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks, to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

November Leaves.

The chill winds of November and hard, cruel frost
 Are scattering the leaves, so their beauty is lost.
 No, not lost, for these colors so brilliant and gay
 Are only in hiding till next April or May.
 These leaves danced through the summer, but now, needing to rest,
 Are eager to flutter to Mother Earth's breast.
 The little roots waiting and shivering with cold
 Creep under these bedclothes of crimson and gold,
 And with Nature's true thrift store the colors so bright
 In the shape of spring tulips to gladden our sight.

AUNT RACHEL.

The Five-hundred-dollar Kitten.

No, she wasn't an Angora nor a Persian nor a Manx. She was just a pretty kitten born right here in America. Her real name was Fuzzy-wuzzy; but, after something wonderful happened, the children were proud to speak of her as their "Five-hundred-dollar Kitten."

What did happen? You shall hear. The children were John and Florence and Mildred. Their father was Mr. Howard, and he was a banker. He was a good father and loved his children. So it happened that they often went to the bank at luncheon time to walk up with him, and more than once they took Fuzzy-wuzzy with them. Mr. Howard always stroked her fur and said nice things to her.

One day Fuzzy thought she would pay a visit to the bank by herself. Mr. Howard chanced to be very busy just then and didn't notice her, so Fuzzy decided to find a snug corner and take a nap. After a while Mr. Howard finished his business, pushed the door of his safe shut, and it was locked so no one but himself could open it.

At luncheon Mildred said: "Where can Fuzzy be? She doesn't come for her little bite." As a great favor, Mildred was allowed to give Fuzzy a choice morsel or two from her own hand, though Mrs. Howard didn't approve of feeding cats at the table.

John laughed. "Probably she's found a mouse and likes it better," he said.

It was just three hours after Mr. Howard swung his safe door shut before he turned the knob to open it. Well! A burglar would hardly have surprised him more, for out burst Fuzzy-wuzzy, with hair and tail bristling. She had chosen a back corner behind some papers for her nap. It was a wonder she wasn't dead; but the safe was a big one, and maybe there was a crack somewhere. Anyway, she was much alive now, and had been, too. You should have seen the money torn to shreds in her efforts to get out. One-hundred-dollar bills, tens, twenties, this angry struggling kitten had made into rags,—just five hundred dollars destroyed.

But would Mr. Howard have to lose all this money? No, indeed. Our government provides redemption for such money. It can be sent to Washington, and clean, whole bills come back in its place.

You can imagine how interested the children were, and how happy over the kitten's escape. They had only one regret. Their father told them how a number of years ago all such mutilated bills sent back to Wash-

ington were made into pulp: then some one moulded that pulp into figurines, statuettes, or small articles, which were sold as souvenirs. On the bottom of each was a small label which told how many dollars went into its make-up.

"Did you ever see one, father?" John asked.

"I remember seeing a tiny pitcher made from this pulp: it was small enough to be worn for a charm on a watch-guard, and, if I am not mistaken, it was marked \$300 on the bottom. Of course the pulp had to be pressed very compactly."

"Do they do that any more?" Florence was very eager to find out. She was thinking about Fuzzy-wuzzy.

"No, dear," her father said. "Now, the pulp is sold every year to the highest bidder and is used in making paper."

"How I wish," Florence sighed, "we could have had a little figure of Fuzzy-wuzzy made from your bills, father, with \$500 marked on the pedestal."

"So do I!" "So do I!" the others joined in. And that was their one regret.

Mr. Howard smiled. "Well, I am quite content to get the money back." And he stooped to stroke Fuzzy just as kindly as if she hadn't come near making "ducks and drakes" of so much.—*Helena A. Hawley, in Sunday School Times.*

For The Beacon.

Rob's Bird Friend.

BY LIDA C. TULLOCH.

Rob stood on the front steps of his house, waiting for his father to come home to dinner. He was dressed in a fresh white suit which showed his bare brown legs below the knees, his hair was smoothly brushed, his face bright and eager. He was a boy any man might be proud and glad to have watching for him after the business cares and worries of the day, and that is what Rob's father thought as he swept up to the curb in his motor, and saw the boy looking along the street for him.

"Hello, son!" he called.

"Hello, papa!" responded Rob. "I'm ready!"

"Ready for what?" asked papa.

"Why, ready for my ride," answered Rob, as if his going was a sure thing, papa having for two or three days taken him for a short ride before dinner, so in child fashion Master Rob thought it was to be a regular custom. "I'm afraid I can't take you to-night, son," said papa. "I'm very tired, and must go back to my office as soon as I've eaten dinner."

"Why, papa," cried Rob, in dismay, "you must take me: my bird will be 'specting me!"

"Your bird!" repeated papa. "What do you mean?"

"Why, the big bird at the Zoo, the one with blue and green feathers and a long, beautiful tail. He'll be walking up and down, looking for me."

"Oh, nonsense!"

"Yes, he will so," persisted Rob. "I've been out there two or three times with mamma 'sides when I've been with you, and he knows me. He likes me, too, and he'll be 'specting me to-night."

Papa began to be a little impatient. "Oh, come now, Rob," he said, "this is foolish! There's no bird waiting for you: don't tease. Papa is very sorry he can't take you. Run in and tell John to 'phone to the garage for the man to come for the motor."

"Yes, papa," answered Rob, obediently, but with such a look of disappointment in his brown eyes that papa suddenly changed his mind.

"Come back, Rob!" he called. "Papa will try to spare a half-hour for you. Jump in!"

Oh, the joy that shone in Rob's face as he heard those words! He climbed in, and snuggled as close to papa as he could without getting in the way of the steering wheel, and off they whirled.

"Suppose this wonderful bird of yours does not show up," teased papa on the way. "What will you say to me then? Perhaps he has forgotten his engagement."

"Oh, no, he'll be there," said Rob, in full confidence.

And sure enough, just after they entered the gate, there was a big peacock strutting proudly up and down the first walk to the right, showing the beautiful colors on his neck and breast as he turned his head this way and that, as though really looking for some one.

"Look, papa! See!" cried Rob, excitedly. "There he is! Didn't I tell you he'd be 'specting me?"

Papa enjoyed it almost as much as Rob. He laughed happily, and the tired look in his eyes didn't show so plainly as he watched the boy and his feathered friend.

The peacock came up quite close to the motor, which papa had stopped and turned out of the road to avoid being in the way of other cars and carriages.

Rob sat on the floor of the car, putting his feet out on the step. He took some sweet crackers from his pocket, broke them up, and held the pieces invitingly to the bird, who, after a few trials, at last was coaxed to eat out of the boy's hand, greatly to his delight, and papa's, also.

"Now we must go," said papa. "Say good-bye, and tell him we'll come again."

"Good-bye! Good-bye!" called Rob, throwing the last of the crackers to the peacock. "We'll come again! Be watching for us!"

"Wouldn't it have been too bad, papa, if we'd disappointed him and not come out?" asked Rob, as they rolled rapidly toward home.

"Yes, it would," answered papa, "and a disappointment to me, also; for then I should not have seen how my sonny-boy's kindness makes him a friend of the birds."

The Mysteries and Mercies of Providence.

God moves in a mysterious way

His wonders to perform;
 He plants His footsteps in the sea,
 And rides upon the storm.

Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
 The clouds ye so much dread
 Are big with mercy, and shall break
 In blessings on your head.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
 But trust Him for His grace;
 Behind a frowning providence
 He hides a smiling face.

His purposes will ripen fast,
 Unfolding every hour;
 The bud may have a bitter taste,
 But sweet will be the flower.

WILLIAM COWPER.

We cannot always oblige, but we can always speak obligingly.

VOLTAIRE.

November.

After the autumn poets sing
A few prosaic days,
A little this side of the snow
And that side of the haze.

Still is the bustle of the brook,
Sealed are the spicy valves;
Mesmeric fingers softly touch
The eyes of many elves.

Perhaps a squirrel may remain
My sentiments to share;
Grant me, O Lord, a sunny mind,
Thy windy will to bear!

EMILY DICKINSON.

For The Beacon.

Under the Hedge.

BY LENORA F. CHANNON.

Basil, looking wistfully through the hedge, thought the boys were having a jolly time: they declared it was a tiresome game, and threw down the mallets and left the croquet ground in disgust.

"Let's go and look for wild strawberries," proposed John, the leader.

"All right, we might as well: there's no fun here," moodily assented Tommy.

"Help me put the mallets and things away first," proposed Archie, to whose father the croquet ground belonged.

"Oh, come on—you can put those few things away after you come back," dissented John, sauntering away with his hands in his pockets.

Archie hesitated a second, well remembering the rule to put the playthings away before leaving the ground; but the boys were already some distance away, and the temptation to run after them was too strong, so, throwing his mallet down with the others on the ground, he easily overtook the two boys just as they reached the edge of the woods.

"Archie Jones certainly is one mean boy," muttered the little boy on the other side of the hedge, as he wistfully watched the three boys disappear. He had forgotten how many happy hours he and this same mean boy had passed together, and only remembered the quarrel of the day before. He only remembered that Archie had told those two new boys where a certain much-cherished and much-watched oriole's nest, discovered and claimed by Basil as his very own, was swinging in the top of a near-by tree. The two new boys had speedily despoiled the little nest of its four dainty eggs, and, not content with that, had even torn down and carried away the little nest itself. They had taken the eggs to add to their "collection," they had told Archie, when he had faintly remonstrated.

Archie was really very much vexed over the theft, but Basil had gotten so very angry, when he had found the nest torn down and gone, and had spoken so wrathfully to Archie about his "robber friends," that he had pretended to think it was all right. Instead of getting angry at his new friends for doing such a thing, he became angry at Basil for resenting it.

That was why Basil was on one side of the



OXEN PLOUGHING—ROSA BONHEUR.

hedge and Archie and the two new boys were on the other, but the two little neighbors had played croquet together so long that Basil could not resist the temptation to creep close to the hedge and watch the progress of the game on the other side.

That is also the reason why Archie had not enjoyed the game, even though the two new little boys were with him. He missed his merry little chum, and the presence of the new boys reminded him of the despairing cries of the two old orioles when they returned and found their home gone and all their beautiful eggs gone—they did not know where.

As Basil disconsolately watched the trio disappear into the woods, a sudden thought struck him, and he sat down by the side of the hedge again to think. He remembered that only the day before yesterday Archie's father had told them that, if Archie forgot to put away the mallets and balls, after they had finished playing with them, he should prohibit their using the ground for a week.

The Jones children were all very fond of playing croquet, and Basil knew that Archie would feel badly if the game was prohibited, even for a short while, through his carelessness.

"Aha!" thought Basil, "now I can get even with Mr. Archie for telling where my nest was. I just know that he won't get back from the woods before his father comes home to dinner, because it is almost six o'clock now. Mr. Jones always passes right by here, and, if the things are in the middle of the ground in a heap and all the boys are gone away, he will be sure to notice them. Well, if I can't play, I just hope Archie does get caught; 'twill serve him right for acting so mean."

So Basil settled himself down under the high hedge to watch for Mr. Jones's arrival.

He heard the bees humming over his head, he saw the birds go skimming through the clear air far above. It was very quiet now that the three noisy boys had gone. Basil heard away off in the distance a childish voice pipe up with the words of an old hymn:

"Yield not to temptation,
For yielding is sin."

"Yield not to temptation," sang the little

voice. "Revenge is temptation," repeated his conscience.

"For yielding is sin," went on the song. "Revenge is sin," echoed Basil's conscience.

The little boy sat upright. "'Getting even' is revenge, and I said I would 'get even' with Archie for losing my eggs. Well, I just won't yield to this temptation, so here goes," and before the thought had hardly formed in Basil's mind he was on his feet.

Slipping quietly through the hedge he collected the balls and mallets carelessly flung down by the players, and deposited them noiselessly in their box under the porch, then as quietly crept back again to his own side of the hedge.

Not a moment too soon had the croquet set been put away; for, as Basil flung himself down again under the hedge, Mr. Jones came down the street, and, glancing over the lawn, passed into the house.

"Say, old man," said Archie the next day, overtaking Basil on his way to school, "thanks for putting away those mallets and things last night. I clean forgot to come back and put them away; but I'll not forget another time, for I had such a scare when I remembered. Come over to-night and have a game, won't you? And, say, Basil, I'm awfully sorry about those eggs. I had no idea those boys would go for them when I showed them the nest, and I really felt awfully bad about it myself."

"Never mind about the eggs, Archie," manfully said Basil. "Maybe the cats would have gotten the little birds, anyway," seeking for some comforting excuse to meet his little playmate halfway. "All right, I'll be over to-night, and we'll have a nice game. Oh, say," as they were going into school, "who told you I put those croquet things in under the porch, anyway?"

"Mary. She was sitting by the parlor window, singing to herself, and thought I had put them away until she saw you come over and do it."

"How funny, for it was Mary's singing which made me do it: I thought I wouldn't at first," confessed Basil.

So the two chums parted better friends than ever.

God be praised that I am overtaken with misfortune and not with sin.
SAADI.

For The Beacon.

Torches and Truth.

BY CHARLES W. CASSON.

On the Fourth of July of this summer some twenty of us went, just before sunset, about two miles through the Lynn Woods to a place called Mount Gilead, from which we could look out over miles and miles of territory and watch the firework display of many towns and cities. It was a beautiful sight, and we stayed there until long after the sun dropped behind the trees in the west.

Now, the only way to reach Mount Gilead, from our side of the woods at least, is by a narrow and very indistinct path that twines in and out of the rocks and trees. It was hard enough to find the path by daylight; but, when at last we started for home in the darkness, we found it quite impossible to make our way.

We were at a loss to know what to do, except to camp out on the moss for the night, when one member of the party managed to make a torch, whose flickering flame lit up a small circle of the darkness. Going ahead of the line, he was able to pick out the path and guide us past the rough places where we surely would have fallen. And at last, after an exciting time, we managed to reach the road that led us to our homes.

What that young man did that night with his flickering torch you and I can do, and ought to do, with our torch of truth. It is possible for us all to guide somebody out of the darkness into safety if we only let the light of the truth we know shine out in the darkness where it is needed.

You remember that Jesus said to those who were following him and helping him help others, "Ye are the light of the world." And there is not a boy or girl who reads this sermonette who may not also become a light in the world, to help people find the right way, and to guide them past dangers to their own home door.

Every truth is a torch. But a torch will not burn if it is shut up in a tight place where the air is shut out. You are discovering at school that, if a bit of blazing wood is placed under a glass dome, it will burn up the air and go out. It must remain outside if it would continue to burn.

And the truth torch is exactly the same. The truth you learn in Sunday school and shut away in your mind cannot give any light. You must speak it in the open, in the public-school yard, in the playground, before it will become a real, blazing torch of truth. And that is what truth is for,—to give light.

The light it casts will guide not only your own feet, but many others as well. Twenty of us followed the young man down from Mount Gilead, and hundreds may be guided by the light of the torch you hold. Think of the multitudes who have been guided by the torch of the young man of Galilee,—

"The victor, bravely holding fast
His torch of truth, with stalwart frame,
Until, upon the bitter last,
It fell, and set the world aflame!"

It will cost you something, though, just as it did Jesus. The torch burns into ashes and must be renewed. To give light you must give up your selfishness. You cannot keep an apple and give it away at the same time. The cost must always be reckoned. But some time you will find that always, always, the cost of doing good is never too much to pay.

A torch burns better in the wind, which always fans it into a brighter flame. And the wind of opposition will do the same to your truth torch. It will only make it blaze more brightly. It cannot blow it out. So let us each move on, holding aloft our blazing torches and guiding other people into the ways of safety.

Always Something Sings.

Let me go where'er I will,
I hear a sky-born music still;
It sounds from all things old,
It sounds from all things young.
From all that's fair, from all that's foul,
Peals out a cheerful song.

It is not only in the rose,
It is not only in the bird,
Not only where the rainbow glows,
Nor in the song of woman heard,
But in the darkest, meanest things
There always, always something sings.

'Tis not in the high stars above,
Nor in the cup of budding flowers,
Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone,
Nor in the bow that smiles in showers,
But in the mud and scum of things
There always, always something sings.
EMERSON.

QUESTION BOX.

(The questions in this department are answered by Rev. William I. Lawrence, unless otherwise indicated.)

Should a school have its grades correspond to those of the day school, or should it follow strictly its own system? I ask, because in our public schools the work of two grades is sometimes covered in one year by exceptionally bright pupils.

That is the easiest, perhaps the best, method. Grading, however, is for the pupil, not the pupil for the grading. Any rule that sacrifices the child is faulty. Where the course of instruction is strictly graded, it may happen that a double promotion in the Sunday school, following a similar one in the day school, means that the pupil will thus miss some important topic. Thus, in one such school a few bright pupils received a double promotion in the day school. To keep them in the same Sunday school class would separate them from those who were thenceforth to be their schoolmates. But to give them double promotion in the Sunday school would cause them to miss the course on Jesus of Nazareth (Beacon Series, Grade VIII.), and make them pass from Old Testament Narratives to the Work of the Apostles. The difficulty was solved in this case by placing them under a tutor who carried them through the intervening book. The same brightness and earnestness that had secured them the extra promotion in the public school enabled them to make up this link in a few weeks. Any method may have its difficulties, but these may be met by a little effort. The public school determines with greater precision than can be had in any other way the comparative ability of pupils. It also compels children of like ability to work together five days in the week. Thus the public-school gradation seems to be, on the whole, the best for our Sunday schools to follow.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA VII.

I am composed of 18 letters.
My 17, 4, 15, 3, 9, is the seat of love.
My 18, 6, 5, 11, is an outcry.
My 7, 2, 14, 12, is a father.
My 1, 15, 8, 16, is an insect.
My 13, 4, 18, 7, 10, 14, is a result of hot water and steam.
My whole is a useful invention.
EMMA H. WHITFORD.

AN OLD PUZZLE.

I am small, but, when entire,
Enough to set the world on fire;
Leave off a letter, then 'tis clear
I can maintain a herd of deer;
Leave off another, and then you'll find
I once have saved all human kind.

CONUNDRUM.

I'm a creature most useful, most needed, most known,
Of any of those who perambulate town;
Take from me one letter, the same I shall be;
Take from me two letters, take three, or take four,
And still I remain the same as before.
Y. D.

A DETERMINATION PUZZLE.

I am to determine.
Add two letters to me and I am a tree.
Add three letters to me and I am a boy's name.
Add three letters again and I am ready.
Add one letter to me and I am testimonials.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 5.

ENIGMA V.—Mediterranean Sea.

WORD SQUARE.—A SPEN
SHORE
POLES
ERECT
NESTS

LESSON IN GEOGRAPHY.—1. Marion. 2. Bath.
3. Botany. 4. Butler. 5. May. 6. Hull.
PUZZLE.—Shoestring.

Arthur Litchfield, Providence, R.I., and F. H. Bailey, Rochester, N.H., have responded to our request for puzzles. We thank them, but are still saying, "More, more."

Dudley's sister Gertrude happened to get between him and something he wished to see. "Get out of my looking, Gertie," commanded the little fellow.

In all sorts of husks and shells, hard, withered, and dead, God sees a goodness we are always missing. When He goes forth with His reapers to gather His harvest, He looks as lovingly now as once He looked through the eyes of Christ, His son, for all the good there is anywhere. There may be only a single grain in October where He put in a grain in March. He bids His angels gather that as carefully as if it were an hundred-fold.
ROBERT COLLYER.

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